

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SUFFOLK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARKS,
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION
MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 18, 2016
WEST SAYVILLE GOLF COURSE, MEADOWEDGE
WEST SAYVILLE, NEW YORK**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Gilbert Cardillo	Trustee, Town of Riverhead
Dawn Hopkins	Chair, Trustee, Town of Brookhaven
Debra Kolyer	Member of the Board
Peter Leis	Trustee, Town of Islip
Arthur Leudesdorf	Trustee, Town of Southold
Terence McSweeney	Trustee, Town of Babylon
Alexander McKay	Trustee, Town of Huntington
Terrence Pearsall	Member of the Board
Michael Rosato	Trustee, Town of Smithtown
William B. Sickles	Trustee, Town of Southampton
Richard F. White, Jr.	Trustee, Town of East Hampton

ABSENT

Kathleen Gooding	Vice Chair, Town of Shelter Island
VACANT	Member at Large

PARKS DEPARTMENT

Greg Dawson	Commissioner
Jim Barr	Superintendent
Tony Trotta	Superintendent
Terry Maccarrone	Coordinator of Community Based Programs
Nick Gibbons	Principal Environmental Analyst
Barbara Rittman	Senior Clerk Typist

GUESTS

PUBLIC PORTION

Kevin McAllister spoke representing Defend H2O regarding vector control activities. He provided an update on the State of Connecticut's current regulations. About three years ago, Connecticut passed legislation to prohibit the use of the larvacide methoprene, along with BTI (a bacterial agent). Vector control regularly sprays both of these agents over the tidal and fresh water wetlands in Suffolk County. The University of Connecticut did studies and found these pesticides in some of the lobsters that were sampled. In response to the fishing community, a statewide ban was issued, except in situations where there is the incidence of West Nile present.

More recently, US Senator Christopher Murphy corresponded to Governor Cuomo in late September, 2015 requesting that the State of New York seek to issue a statewide ban as well since the Long Island Sound is shared with Connecticut. As a biologist, Mr. McAllister stated that he has spent a lot of time investigating the compounds that are used. He asked that the Parks Trustees consider his findings and possibly gather additional information so that eventually Suffolk County can move in the same direction since this pesticide is in question of affecting our waters.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 21, 2016

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee Leis. The minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

Commissioner Dawson reported on minor changes to the Parks fee schedule which went into effect on January 1, 2016. The amended version of the user fee schedule will be laid on the table at the next meeting before the full Legislature and Commissioner Dawson asked for trustee approval.

A motion to approve the amended user fee schedule as written was made by Trustee White and seconded by Trustee McKay. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

A Master Plan for Cathedral Pines County Park was completed and Terry Maccarrone gave a brief presentation on some of the details. Highlights of some of the architectural recommendations from the comprehensive report were passed out for trustee review. Terry reported that the Parks Department commissioned representatives from DPW such as Ken Phalen, architect who was also present for the meeting and also representatives from BBS Design Consultants. There are several things that Parks would like to move forward with in the very near future. Creating such amenities as utilities (electric, water) sanitary stations, restrooms, a maintenance and check-in facility are priorities because presently the camping area is only an open field. These additions will all be phased in over several years.

Commissioner Dawson stated that with added amenities to the park, there will be much greater usage than it presently receives. There have additionally been many requests made by patrons and this would increase revenues for the county. Terry stated that Cathedral Pines CP has great potential with state and town properties situated directly adjacent, and the availability of hiking and biking trails across the street at Prosser Pines CP.

Trustee Cardillo inquired if plans are limited due to the fact that Cathedral Pines is located in the core of the Pine Barrens. Nick Gibbons stated that there are limits, but since it is an existing recreational facility the Pine Barrens Act allows for improvements and/or expansion of those lands. Sears Bellows CP, Southaven CP and also state parks lie within the Pine Barrens core area as well. The entire Cathedral Pines CP is also restricted by the Wild, Scenic & Recreational Rivers Act (DEC). There are four rivers on Long Island that are regulated by this and the headwaters to the Carmans River lies within Cathedral Pines CP.

Commissioner Dawson added that on the weekend before Memorial Day every year, the Suffolk Committee for Camping holds its annual season kickoff at Cathedral Pines CP. The event offers live music and many different activities. Other than this large event, the park only has open fields with very few amenities available to offer patrons. The planned updates to the park will help to remedy what it is lacking in and encourage more usage.

Nick Gibbons updated on the Smith Point CP dredging project. To date, 1.8 million cubic yards have been placed and the total project is 2.1 million cubic yards. Approximately 50,000 cubic yards are placed per week, depending on weather conditions and/or mechanical delays. It is hoped that the project will be finished by the end of March which is when piping plover nesting begins. The dredging has now moved west and out of the plover area, and even west of the outer beach public access area so Nick is working with the DEC to get an extension on the dredging deadline. This will allow for continued work until May, if need be.

Trustee meeting locations were discussed. Trustee Cardillo requested that a meeting be held in as many different townships as possible. The March 17th meeting was changed to Indian Island County Park and Blydenburgh CP was agreed upon for the October 20th meeting.

A motion to approve the trustee meeting locations as amended and with the option of changing any of them was made by Trustee McKay and seconded by Trustee Sickles. It was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.

CHAIR'S REPORT

Chair Hopkins requested a follow-up on the bid for the contractor for the Meschutt CP septic system project. Jim Barr reported that it will be going out for bid in March and is due back in early April. After the actual award of the bid, the county has 84 days to install it. At this time, it does not look like the project will be completed by the original set goal of Memorial Day.

Jim continued that he met with the Beach Huts concessionaire for Meschutt CP to discuss the extensive work that will have to be done inside the building to re-plumb it to the new septic system. There is currently no grease trap and the restrooms can't go through the grease trap. They have to go directly into the sanitary system and the kitchen drains have to go into a grease trap and then come in. It will require complete new plumbing and drainage lines in the concrete slab inside the building which is a substantial job. When the concessionaire was rewarded his 5-year contract renewal, he added that in 2017 he wanted to build a free standing restroom directly to the east of the existing building and perhaps connect it with a breeze way. There would be four fixtures in the mens and 4 fixtures in the ladies rooms. The concessionaire asked if he could move ahead with that project now instead of attempting to renovate all of the waste lines in the existing building. The feasibility of this idea is being discussed, as well as how quickly permits could be acquired to build a new restroom facility. The restrooms in the existing building would then be expanded to enlarge the kitchen area. The project would be funded by the concessionaire.

Commissioner Dawson stated that there has also been severe erosion on the beach front at Meschutt that goes right up to the parking lot. A meeting has been scheduled with DPW to request assistance in getting 5,000 cubic yards of needed sand out onto the beach. Terry Maccarrone added that Parks is hoping to accelerate dredging of the bay for a beach nourishment (not the protective dune) to help build it up because it continues to wash away.

Chair Hopkins updated with news on the Ronkonkoma Lake Foundation. She reported that she has been in contact with a professor at SUNY Oneonta who runs two graduate programs in Lake Management. The Master's thesis course is on watershed management, takes two years to complete and there are twenty lakes that are on the list to choose from. One of the students who will be entered into the program in the fall is from Lake Ronkonkoma and this would place studies on this lake at the top of the list. The grant is 50/50 which would mean \$2,500.00/year. Chair Hopkins is very hopeful that the Lake Foundation will contribute \$4,000.00 and perhaps the second year will be picked up through fundraising. Chair Hopkins is encouraged and hopeful about it and plans to contact Legislator Kennedy to discuss the proposition.

Chair Hopkins raised the question of all of the news lately on nitrogen, contaminants and now methoprene in the water and inquired how much the county is involved with it. Commissioner Dawson stated that the County Executive has declared that the war on nitrogen in the water is a top priority of his administration. Resolutions have been passed that when upgrades to our septic systems are made in highly sensitive areas, we will be obligated to put in new types of receptors. This is what is going on now with the Meschutt CP project. Chair Hopkins added that Governor Cuomo has just recently approved a \$600 million grant for NYS drinking water.

ROUND TABLE

Trustee Sickles reported that he read that the DEC got no bidders for the tree removal from the southern pine issue. Nick stated that there was no commercial interest to get involved with the cleanup.

Trustee Sickles inquired about the William Bowman historic/environmental review plan at Hubbard CP. Nick reported that it is coming along very well. There was a recent meeting at the site to review some of the plans for adaptive reuse of the buildings. There is also an archeological assessment that is moving forward, as well as a biological inventory and identification of priority areas for natural resource management. There are a few crushed culverts that need to be addressed, invasive species issues, and a variety of rare and endangered plants that have been identified. Trail improvements and signage are also included in the plans. The review should be completed in the fall.

Trustee Cardillo reported that there haven't been any recent meetings that he knows of regarding the status of the North Fork Preserve County Park. Nick stated that he doesn't have any new information on it either. Trustee Cardillo stated that at the last meeting the residents who lived in the surrounding area were reminded that the land was purchased for active recreation purposes on the southern portion and passive recreation for the northern portion of the property. Carmella Masem, from the Suffolk Committee for Camping was also present at the meeting, along with a group of avid campers who communicated their desire to have more camp grounds in Suffolk County and that this would be a perfect location.

Trustee Cardillo inquired about the sanitary system work at Indian Island CP near to where the entrance is. Nick stated that the work going on there is for a new check-in cabin.

Commissioner Dawson added that the purchase request for the replacement restroom parts was placed.

Trustee Leudesdorf inquired about the status of plans for the new dining facility at Peconic Dunes CP. Commissioner Dawson reported that the county has received notification from Vito Minei, of Cornell Cooperative Extension that it is no longer willing to commit to contributing funds to offset the cost of the dining hall that was discussed for the new long term agreement. This current agreement expired in 2016. A new long term commitment and what will be decided regarding the dining hall is uncertain right now. Commissioner Dawson will be meeting with Vito Minei in the near future to re-evaluate and work out a new agreement between Suffolk County Parks and Cornell Cooperative Extension.

Trustee Cardillo added that when Bernadette Castro was the State Parks Commissioner, she initiated a naming rights program whereby corporations could make contributions toward a needed facility. Commissioner Dawson stated that legislation was passed several years back directing the Suffolk County Parks Department to come up with a committee and create an RFP to sell naming rights to an appropriate interested party. It was hoped that possibly local businesses such as a pet store for example, might step forward and contribute/sponsor funding towards a county dog park but there was very little response. It was written into the RFP that even with a large corporation sponsoring a particular park, trustee approval would be needed based both on the park and the content of the advertising.

Trustee McKay reported on a 3 acre adjoining property to the Williams property ("Wawapek Preserve") in Cold Spring Harbor that the Town of Huntington and Suffolk County purchased jointly about one year ago. The 3 acre property has a house, a green house and another building on it and the North Shore Land Alliance and Huntington Town have entered into an agreement whereby the town will acquire the development rights for the acreage that does not contain the buildings and the Land Alliance will purchase the buildings. The 3 acre addition to "Wawapek Preserve" was purchased for \$700,000.00.

Trustee Rosato reported that Suffolk County purchased 3 lots totaling 16 acres in Kings Park several years ago located next to 69 acres of NYS DEC conservation land which was originally part of the Kings Park State Hospital. Legislator Trotta is working on acquiring several parcels totaling approximately 20 acres in the area from a developer who wants to put housing there. The DEC created a visitor's area on its property with walking and hiking trails for the community in an attempt to discourage ATV use through this conservation area. Trustee Rosato inquired if Legislator Trotta were successful in acquiring the 20 acre parcel, would the

Parks Trustees agree to sharing management of the 20 acres with the DEC or transfer the 20 acres and the 16 acres to the DEC. Nick stated that the county has entered into management agreements with the DEC on numerous properties when Parks either doesn't have access or staff to maintain parcels. The county could enter into a cooperative agreement with the state to manage the trails. Nick stated that he would check with the Planning Department to see if any additional parcels in the area may possibly be owned by the county and report back at the next trustee meeting.

The next Parks Trustee meeting will be held at Indian Island Golf Course on Thursday, March 17, 2016.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee White and was seconded by Trustee McKay. The motion was unanimously approved by a vote of 11-0-0.